

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR SESSION**

April 7, 2015

7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: J. Harry Lange, Joey Loudermilk, Martha Chewning, Becky Langston, Jim Woods. Staff Present: Greg Wood, County Manager; John Taylor, County Attorney; Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Lange called the Regular Session to order.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Chairman Lange asked John Taylor, County Attorney, to lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance, and Mr. Taylor complied.
3. **MINUTES.** The motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2015, Regular Session was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.
4. **APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS**
  - A. **David & Mary Ellen Taylor: Washington Road Paving.** David & Mary Ellen Taylor, citizens who live on Washington Road, appeared before the Board to remind them that they are still waiting for Washington Road to be paved as they were promised when they moved there 19 years ago, and then a few times throughout the years; and that they are getting tired of being told something only to have it not happen. Discussion included that 30 right-of-way deeds were prepared and sent out, either by USPS First Class mail or picked up by David Taylor to have signed; that property owners were requested to have the deeds returned by April 24; that Mrs. Taylor will be notified on April 27 as to which property owners did not return their deed; that it takes time to search titles and deeds in order to prepare the appropriate deeds; that the County is in the process of doing the same for 10 roads, including Washington Road; and that if all goes well, it is hoped the road could be paved soon.
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
  - A. **Financial Statement: January 2015.** Chairman Lange said that action had been tabled from the March 17 meeting pending a question regarding water expense at the Cattleman's building. Greg Wood, County Manager, said that research is still underway, and he hopes to have a response by the end of the week. Chairman Lange again tabled action to the April 21 meeting.
  - B. **Budget Amendments #1 FY 14/15.** Chairman Lange said that all but one item on the budget amendments had been approved due to a question regarding "unbudgeted annual membership fee". Greg Wood, County Manager, said that research showed that the \$3,000 should have been described as an unbudgeted service agreement for monitoring at the Courthouse. The motion to approve the \$3,000 budget amendment was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.
  - C. **Job Description: Development Services Director/County Engineer.** Chairman Lange said that approval of this job description had been tabled pending a few changes, which are shown in red. Commissioner Woods asked that one more change be made in the first descriptive paragraph under "essential functions" to replace that last two words "when required" with "annually". The motion to approve the job description with the additional change was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.
6. **NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. **Introduction of Paul Glick, Finance Officer.** Chairman Lange introduced Paul Glick, Finance Officer, and said that Mr. Glick is well-known with ACCG staff and has taught several finance courses at the Carl Vinson Institute for ACCG certification requirement.
  - B. **Resolution Honoring James York.** Chairman Lange said that James York, Public Works Director, has retired after several years of service with the County, and will be missed. He then read the resolution and made the motion to approve same. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously.
  - C. **Proclamation: Donate Life Month in Harris County.** Chairman Lange read the document proclaiming April as Donate Life Month in Harris and made the motion to approve same. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.

7. **PUBLIC HEARING @ 7:30 PM**

- A. **Explanation of Public Hearing Procedures.** Chairman Lange explained the procedures involved with the Public Hearing.
- B. **Conflict of Interest Forms.** The Conflict of Interest forms were completed at the request of Chairman Lange.
- C. **Application of Janell Dixon to rezone 2.47 acres of Land Lots 113 & 144, Land District 18, Map 048A, Parcel 050, from R-2 (Medium Density Residential) to C-3 (Neighborhood Commercial); present use vacant building; proposed use photography studio; property located at 245 West Bon Acre Road, Cataula.** Chairman Lange called the Public Hearing to order, read the specifics of the application, and said that both the Planner and the Planning Commission had recommended approval of the rezoning with conditions, which were very similar. He then read the recommended conditions of the Planning Commission, which are: (1) only for a photography studio; (2) any exterior lighting is to be directed away from all adjoining residential property and public roads; (3) only one principal freestanding sign is permitted that is a maximum of 8' in height, with a maximum sign structure of 32 square feet (double-faced), with external illumination; and (4) the building sign is limited to 25% of the wall on which the sign is placed, up to a maximum of 100 square feet. Janell Dixon, applicant, appeared before the Board and said that the building has sat vacant for several years since her daughter had to close her business; that several inquiries have been made regarding the use of the building; that she feels the photograph studio is the best fit for the property; that it will not cause an increase in traffic as the owners go to specific sites to take photographs or by appointment only in the building; that the business will be an asset to the County; and that the studio owners have spent a lot of time and money in fixing up the place.

Chairman Lange asked if anyone wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to the rezoning application. There being none, he asked Mrs. Dixon if she had any further comments.

Mrs. Dixon said that the studio owners are residents of Harris County and that she would like to see the property rezoned for the studio. In response to questions from the Board, Mrs. Dixon said that she lives about three-fourths of a mile down the road from the subject property on the same side of the road.

There being no further comments or questions, Chairman Lange closed the Public Hearing and made the motion to approve the rezoning with the four conditions: (1) only for a photography studio; (2) any exterior lighting is to be directed away from all adjoining residential property and public roads; (3) only one principal freestanding sign is permitted that is a maximum of 8' in height, with a maximum sign structure of 32 square feet (double-faced), with external illumination; and (4) the building sign is limited to 25% of the wall on which the sign is placed, up to a maximum of 100 square feet. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously.

8. **NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED)**

- D. **Requests for Tax Refund: Callaway Gardens.** Chairman Lange said that nine (9) requests for tax refunds had been received from Callaway Gardens due to their having purchased vehicle tags in February after selling the vehicles in November. He then read the requests, which total \$218.05.

- (1) 1994 International Truck: \$49.44
- (2) 1998 Ford Super Wagon: \$36.99
- (3) 2001 Ford Ranger: \$27.03
- (4) 1991 Isu Conventional Truck: \$9.96
- (5) 1998 Ford Econoline Van: \$18.50
- (6) 1990 GMC Truck: \$23.12
- (7) 1993 Isu Conventional Truck: \$5.70
- (8) 2001 Ford Econoline Van: \$31.66
- (9) 1986 Ford Conventional Truck: \$15.65

The motion to approve the nine (9) tax refund requests totaling \$218.05 was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously.

- E. **Alcohol Ordinance Amendment Regarding Age for Serving Alcohol.** Chairman Lange said that Edward Callaway, who had requested such an amendment be considered, has since requested that it be removed from consideration until further notice. There were no objections to removing this item from the agenda. Greg Wood, County Manager, said that Mr. Callaway may suggest that such an amendment be made that will only affect Callaway Gardens.
- F. **Water Rates for Homeowners Associations.** Chairman Lange asked Greg Wood, County Manager, to discuss this issue. Mr. Wood said that the Water Works has residential rates and commercial rates; that it was discovered that some Homeowners Associations (HOAs) are being charged the residential rate and some the commercial rate; and that Water Works would like the Board to set policy regarding same. Jeff Culpepper, Water Works Director, was in attendance, verified that there are different rates, and said that a change was made to some HOAs a couple of months ago, but that a policy is needed. Discussion included that if the Homeowners Association (HOA) is using water only for landscaping purposes at the subdivision entrance or on common property within, residential rates should apply, but if there are commercial ventures, such as golf or other revenue producing venues, then commercial rates should apply.

Ted Theus, of Rocky Shoals HOA, appeared before the Board and said that the rate his HOA had been paying was changed from the residential rate to the commercial rate, which will cause greater expenses than their budget can handle; and that the HOA does not make money.

Following discussion, the motion to freeze the rates for HOAs at the rate they were being charged before the recent change was made by Commissioner Loudermilk, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously. Mr. Culpepper was directed to meet with Mr. Wood about a policy.

- G. **Proclamation: Toastmasters Month in Harris County.** Chairman Lange said that a request was made by Toastmasters International for the County to proclaim April as Toastmasters Month in Harris County. Rather than read the proclamation, Chairman Lange asked that Charlie Mae Ferrell, the District Governor for District 14 of Toastmasters International, read the document, which she did. The motion to approve the proclamation was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously. Ms. Ferrell thanked the Board for the proclamation and said that they are having their district meeting at Callaway Gardens on April 24 and 25. Paul Jacobs, Public Relations Officer of District 14 of Toastmasters International, also thanked the Board.
- H. **Recognition of EMS Director of the Year.** Chairman Lange announced that Jimmy Carver, Harris County EMS Chief, had been named EMS Director of the Year at the recent district EMS Awards Banquet. He also noted that Bucky Searcy, EMS Supervisor, was recognized for having received previous Cardiac and Trauma awards, and that Shane Owens, Paramedic, received a Stroke award from St. Francis and the Medical Center.

## 9. **COUNTY MANAGER**

- A. **Fire Services Study.** Greg Wood, County Manager, said that he and the Council of Fire Chiefs are requesting that a study be performed on the fire services, that the cost of same could possibly range from \$20,000 to \$70,000, and that he is asking for approval to request proposals regarding same. Discussion included that a committee should be formed to review the proposals and make recommendations to the Board regarding same, and that the committee should consist of two members of the Council of Fire Chiefs, Jimmy Carver (EMS Chief), Monty Davis (911/EMA Director), Commissioner Langston, Greg Wood (County Manager), and Nancy McMichael (County Clerk). The motion to request proposals and to form the committee as indicated was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Loudermilk, and passed unanimously.
- B. **Airport Water Line Extension.** Greg Wood, County Manager, said that plans are to extend the water line at the Airport in order to be able to move forward with the proposed corporate hangar; that a proposal has been received from Champion Wells, who maintains the water system at the Airport, to do the work for \$5.00/foot (approximately \$7,500); that materials will cost about \$12,612; that Jeff Culpepper, Water Works Director, has reviewed the proposal and finds the expenses in line with those of his department; that it is being requested to contract with Champion Wells to complete the Airport water line extension at \$5.00 per foot with the County purchasing the materials; and that the total estimated cost is \$20,112; and that the funds can be taken from the 2014 SPLOST Water Extension line. The motion to approve contracting with Champion Wells at \$5.00 per foot, for the County to purchase

the materials, and for the funds to come from the 2014 SPLOST Water Extension was made by Commissioner Woods, seconded by Commissioner Chewning, and passed unanimously.

10. **COUNTY ATTORNEY**

- A. **Intergovernmental Agreement with Shiloh: Vehicle Repair and Maintenance.** John Taylor, County Attorney, said that an intergovernmental agreement had been drafted, as directed by the Board in December 2014, for the County to perform repairs and maintenance on Shiloh's four vehicles. He then reviewed the document which includes that necessary or emergency repairs to County vehicles takes priority over repairs or maintenance to the City's and that the County will be compensated for parts and labor, which will be billed monthly. Discussion included that Pine Mountain, Hamilton and Waverly Hall have not requested such an agreement; that there are businesses within or close to those particular city limits with which the municipalities probably do business. Following discussion, the motion to approve the agreement was made by Commissioner Langston, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously. (Document can be found in "Contracts & Agreements" file as C&A #15-08.)
- B. **Property Donation Agreement: Loudermilk Family Christian Foundation.** John Taylor, County Attorney, said that an agreement had been drafted in connection with renovations to be made at the Willis House located in Ellerslie Park; that the Loudermilk Family Christian Foundation had previously donated funds to the County to purchase the Willis property; that the Foundation wants to move forward with renovations to the Willis House, which will be used for various community functions, and to oversee same. He then reviewed the agreement. Following discussion, the motion to approve the agreement was made by Commissioner Chewning, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed with four in favor (Chewning, Woods, Lange, Langston), no opposition, and one abstention (Loudermilk). Chairman Lange then thanked Commissioner Loudermilk for the Foundation's generosity to the County. (Document can be found in "Contracts & Agreements" file as C&A #15-09.)
- C. **Resolution: GDOT State Highway Abandonment of a Section of Georgia Highway 354 and Acceptance by County.** John Taylor, County Attorney, said that documents had been received from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) at the County's request, to remove and abandon a section of Georgia Highway 354 as a State Road, to redesignate another short road as Georgia Highway 354, and for the County to formally accept the abandoned section of Georgia Highway 354 as a County road. He then reviewed the documents and accompanying drawing showing the section to be abandoned and the short road to be renamed as Georgia Highway 354, which will then connect to Georgia Highway 190. Following discussion, the motion to approve the resolution and related document was made by Commissioner Chewning, seconded by Commissioner Woods, and passed unanimously.

11. **OTHER**

- A. **Recycling Trailer at Pate Park Update.** Commissioner Langston said that the recycling trailer at Pate Park has been emptied four times; that it has been full each time; and that there has been no contamination of the recycled items.
- B. **SPLOST Distribution.** Commissioner Langston asked when the Board would next discuss the SPLOSTs and distribution. Consensus was that Greg Wood, County Manager, is to report to the Board during its May 5 meeting regarding same.
- C. **Library Funding Update.** Chairman Lange announced that the \$2,000,000 funding for the new library had been included in the State's budget and is awaiting the Governor's signature, and that once the County receives the funding, there will be a total of \$4,000,000 to go toward the construction of a new library near the Community Center.

12. **ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business, the motion to adjourn was made by Chairman Lange, seconded by Commissioner Langston, and passed unanimously.

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J. Harry Lange, Chairman

Attest:

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Nancy D. McMichael, County Clerk